

Applicants: Howard J. Worman and Naoto Mamiya
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Page: 2

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 2, 4, 6, 8 and 12-30 without prejudice to applicants' right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in this or a subsequent application.

Please amend claims 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.121(c). The amended claims are presented below and the amendments to the claims are indicated in the marked-up set of claims attached hereto.

B¹ C¹
1. (Amended) A method of treating or preventing hepatitis C virus infection in a subject which comprises administering an effective amount of an Eo protein to the subject, wherein the Eo protein is capable of inhibiting the attachment of hepatitis C virus onto cells by specifically binding to the hepatitis C virus envelope E2 protein so as to treat or prevent hepatitis C virus infection.

B² C²
3. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the hepatitis C virus envelope E2 protein comprises amino acids having an amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:2 (Figure 7).

B³ C³
5. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the hepatitis C virus envelope E2 protein comprises amino acids having an amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:3 (Figure 8).

B⁴ C⁴
7. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the Eo protein comprises amino acids having the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1 (Figure 2).

B⁵
9. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the Eo protein comprises an Eo1 protein having amino acids 1-120 of SEQ ID NO:1.